

# LAVA DOG

## MAGAZINE



OCTOBER 2018

FY18 Quarter 3 in Review

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# LDM *From the Captain's Desk*



Lava Dog Families,

It's an exciting time to be a Lava Dog! As promised last quarter, we've entered a new phase in the ship's life, and we have started to shake off the rust and dust in favor of a little salt. We made the trip out of BAE Shipyard in early June and have completed all of the upgrades and installations associated with the Post Shakedown Availability (PSA) period. The Crew stretched our sea legs successfully twice for sea trial periods in the Southern California Operating Area, returning impressive performances in many of the mission areas we have been unable to apply while in the yards. You all have plenty of justification to be proud of the Lava Dog team!

Also as promised, team *Rafael Peralta* has begun a series of challenging tests and assessments. The Basic Phase has begun in earnest, and the Crew is heavily involved in certifying to integrate with other operating forces in preparation to deploy. We have completed a Crew Certification assessment from our destroyer squadron, navigation and watch team assessments, an engineering Light Off Assessment (LOA), damage control readiness assessment, and preliminary training in seamanship, navigation, engineering, damage control, communications, search and rescue, force protection, supply management, medical readiness, aviation operations, and air, surface, ballistic missile defense, anti-submarine, strike, electronic warfare, cryptology, cyber, and visit, board, search and seizure warfare areas.

These assessments are vital for the ship, vital for our Navy, and vital to national security. Not only are they an opportunity to build and demonstrate proficiency in these mission areas, but they are also how we will sharpen the tools we need to be able to fight and win against a great power competitor. We will become not only better warfighters, but also a very real and visible deterrent force to prevent potential conflicts around the world. The greatest battle is the one not fought, when the other side chooses to remain in port rather than to face the probability of destruction by a superior foe.

Our training will continue to build on the record of success we have already begun to generate, building in both complexity and realism over the next several months. Our operational tempo will go up, with more time away from home, and I ask for the support of every Lava Dog, our families, and friends as we continue to ensure we meet the mission.

"Ready Ship, Ready Crew, Ready Families."

FORTIS AD FINEM!

A. P. DEMEYER

# CONGRATULATIONS

to these

## LAVA DOGS

on their

## PROMOTIONS

### OFFICERS

LTJG Folland, E.

LTJG Folland, K.

LTJG Jensen

LTJG Lawson

LTJG Richie

LT Androsko

LCDR Elzner



LCDR Elzner



The Chief Selects

### CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS

MMC Melo

GSMC Kouch

BMC Hernandez

FCC Macias

FCC Warshaw

DCC Braden

OSC Imler

GSMC Valdez

### SECOND CLASS PETTY OFFICERS

GSM2 Rufty

GM2 Strickland



GSM2 Rufty



*CONGRATULATIONS!*

## SURFACE WARFARE OFFICER (SWO) Pin Recipients



LTJG Folland, E.  
LTJG Folland, K.  
LTJG Lawson

LTJG Folland, E. and LTJG Folland, K. both earned their SWO pins during this past quarter.

## ENLISTED SURFACE WARFARE SPECIALIST (ESWS) Pin Recipients

ET2 Smith  
YN1 Billups  
YN1 Hurtado  
IT2 Luke  
GSM2 Jimenez  
SN Gebelko  
HM2 Hooker  
MM3 Hooper



YN1 Hurtado was pinned by OS1 Alarid.

# *PRT: Are You Ready?*

*CTR<sub>2</sub> Pesola*

**As a reminder, the Physical Readiness Test (PRT) is right around the corner! The Command Fitness Leaders (CFLs) on our ship have taken it upon themselves to help everyone in preparation for this upcoming Cycle. As everyone knows, we hold Command PT every Monday and Wednesday afternoon. Sometimes Sailors do not make it to these sessions due to responsibilities onboard, so I am here to inform you that you have other options to work on your physical fitness! Many are unaware that FEP is held every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 0600. If this is a time that will**

**accommodate your work schedule, it is a great opportunity to work toward your fitness goals. Every Sailor onboard is more than welcome to attend, especially if think you need a little extra work before this next PRT. The ship has also recently gotten more workout equipment onboard. Included in this equipment are free weights, treadmills, and bikes. This allows everyone the opportunity to continue to improve, even if they are stuck onboard for duty. For more information, contact any CFL. We hope to see you out there! ●**



The crew gets together after a tough workout during Command PT.

# New Ombudsman: Kelley Briones

*MMCS Briones*

MMCS Briones with his wife, Kelley.



The Lava Dog family would like to welcome our newest Ombudsman, Kelley Briones. Kelley is the wife of Senior Chief Briones, and they have been married for 19 years. During their marriage, she has lived in Norfolk, Virginia, Bremerton, Washington, and San Diego, California. Even though this is her first time being an Ombudsman, she has been around the military her whole life. Her father was in the Navy for 32 years, and her mother was also an Ombudsman at one time. Kelley was born in Seattle, Washington, but grew up living in numerous other locations, including San Jose, California, Providence, Rhode Island, Delta, Colorado, and Great Lakes, Illinois.

What is an Ombudsman, you ask? An Ombudsman is selected by the Commanding

Officer and is a spouse of a command member who voluntarily serves as the official liaison between the command and its families. The Ombudsman is a vital resource to assist the command in discharging the CO's responsibilities for the morale and welfare of the command's families. Essentially, the Ombudsman is the link between the command and the Navy family. This is especially true in deploying commands, where the Ombudsman is the primary point of contact between the families at home and the command out at sea during deployment. As a spouse or significant other of a Sailor onboard a ship, it is important to get acquainted with your Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is not a counselor or a social worker, but can show you a direct route to getting the assistance you need to find solutions and resources.

Kelley Briones is very excited and honored to be part of the Lava Dog family and looks forward to getting to know the rest of the families. Along with the Lava Dogs' other Ombudsman, Cynthia Beasley, she is ready to assist and help. You can contact either Cynthia or Kelley on the RAFAEL PERALTA OMBUDSMAN page on Facebook, or you can email them at [ombudsmanddg115@gmail.com](mailto:ombudsmanddg115@gmail.com). ●



Members of the command with our two Ombudsmen, Kelley Briones and Cindy Beasley.

# 9/11: NEVER FORGET

FCC WARSHAW



For all Americans, for the rest of time, the phrase “nine-eleven” will evoke a special meaning, a memory of a moment in our history when the world as we knew it changed forever. Few dates in history evoke such a visceral reaction as to exactly where we all were and what we were all doing that fateful day; JFK’s assassination, the Challenger Space Shuttle explosion, and this cowardly attack that changed the landscape of our nation forever. It is fitting, then, that every year on September 11<sup>th</sup>, Americans join together to honor the memory of the more than 3,000 people who died that day. And it is fitting that we observe a moment of silence as a tribute to those lives cut short, as we try to comprehend how quickly and inexplicably events occurred and as a symbol of the empty places left behind in the hearts of those still living.

Every year, we recall and we celebrate what we learned about ourselves on September 11, 2001. We recall and we celebrate how we acted that day. We also learned that our nation is strong. For in the face of such terrible tragedy and ugliness, Americans gathered together in solidarity. We remember once again how ordinary human beings, living their ordinary lives, reacted with extraordinary

heroism when – without warning and in an instant – they were thrown face-to-face with the most fundamental questions of human existence. We remember how years later, the United States persevered in bringing to justice those cowardly persons who coordinated these attacks. Remember the over 3,000 victims of that fateful day, and the tens of thousands of individuals, paid professionals and humble ordinary citizens, who came together to overcome an unspeakable tragedy that has affected us all. ●



# Personal Submission: *The Layers of Lifelines*

ET2 Smith

We discuss lifelines as a command weekly. An incident happened to me on my way to a gun shoot, and it taught me a valuable lesson about lifelines. While attempting to get to a gun shoot, my GPS decided to stop working. For those of you who know me and my sense of direction (or lack thereof), this was an extreme problem for me. When I finally regained signal, my GPS decided it was a good idea to send me off-roading on the backside of a mountain in my Nissan Versa. I called FC1 Massingill to help me try and figure out where I was. He attempted to help me, but I was still confused. My GPS decided to trick me once again and it sent me the wrong way up the mountain, and I got stuck. At this point, I became overwhelmed and freaked out. When I get overwhelmed, I lose all of my rational thought. In my mind, I felt I would have to now live on this mountain. I instantly got mad at my mom for never putting me into girl scouts because I was stuck in the middle of nowhere and I didn't know how to hunt or forage for food. I also had no phone signal. As I left my car and walked down the hill, I began to think, "If these hills have eyes, I'm going to be so upset."



Often times, it takes teamwork to help someone through a difficult situation.

When I finally got signal, PS2 Coney called me and helped calm me down. CS1 Kelley, who was with her, guided me through how to drop a pin on my phone so that they could find me. They came to my rescue and also brought FC1 Massingill, who was able to drive my car backwards down the mountain. As I sat in the passenger seat with my eyes covered, I realized something: sometimes you have an issue that is so complex that it requires more than one lifeline. In my case, it took PS2 Coney to calm me down, CS1 to create a plan to find me, and FC1 Massingill (and Jesus) to take the wheel and execute that plan to drive me down the mountain. So if you ever find yourself in a tough spot, don't get discouraged if the first person you reach out to can't help you. You owe it to yourself to keep trying all lifelines available to you until you get out of your complicated situation. ●

# Review of

# USS RAFAEL PERALTA'S

## First Year as a Commissioned Ship

ENS Condie

Our ship commissioned on Sunday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017. On Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Lava Dogs gathered to celebrate *USS RAFAEL PERALTA*'s first anniversary as a commissioned ship. We also reflected on all of the contributions we have made, struggles we have overcome, and bonds we have formed. There is no denying that we have had to work extremely hard to get the ship to where it is today. Everyone has had a direct impact on this milestone. Some crew members have been here long enough to see the transformation of the ship from its early days in Bath, Maine to the well-oiled battle ship that it is today. Others have just arrived within the past few weeks. We have a wide variety of experience and diversity onboard this ship, which is what makes us strong.

This past year has been packed with multiple certifications and evolutions.

Some of the major highlights include:  
ASW Combat Systems Ship Qualification



The crew celebrated its first anniversary as a commissioned ship and presented Rosa Peralta with a picture frame and flowers.

Trials (CSSOT), Sail-Around, Homecoming, Commissioning, AAW Combat Systems Ship Qualification Trials (CSSOT), Final Contract Trials (FCT), Post-Shakedown Availability (PSA), Crew Certification (CREWCERT), and Light Off Assessment (LOA). Additionally, our ship received the Gold Anchor for Retention award due to our diligent efforts.

Many events that have led up to those major accomplishments include: our Family Day Cruise, where we got to barbecue out on the open water and show our loved ones what we do on a day-to-day basis; the Midshipmen Cruise, where we were able to give Mids a small taste of the Surface Warfare life; participation in the media, including the shooting of “The Last Ship” and the SNA promotion film; as well as multiple gun shoots, anchoring evolutions, UNREPS, Helicopter Deck Landing Qualifications, small boat operations, and training team drills, which have all contributed in us becoming more proficient at sea.



CDR DeMeyer poses with Rosa Peralta, Sgt. Peralta's mother, at the barbecue.

Not only have we kept busy onboard, but we have also made a difference in

our communities. Crew members of our ship volunteered in many events. We were involved in the Main Street Clean Up, where we coordinated with other commands to help clean the streets of National City. We participated in the WWII Honor flight, where World War II heroes were given the welcoming and honor they deserve at the San Diego Airport. We had volunteers take part in the Barrio Logan Cleanup, which was conducted with numerous Naval Base commands to clean Barrio Logan and areas surrounding Naval Base San Diego. Sailors volunteered for the Support the Enlisted Project (STEP), where they helped sort and organize baby items to give to new mothers. Crew members participated in the PTA Fundraiser at Ballard Center to help PTA raise money for the youth of San Diego. Finally, Lava Dogs also volunteered at Father Joe's to help feed the homeless in Downtown San Diego.

Since our commissioning, we have had approximately 51 new check-ins. We've detached 65 plank owners, and there have been 20 babies born to Sailors attached to our command. We have had a total of eight CPO promotions, 78

## LDM

Petty Officer promotions, and 14 Sailors have earned their ESWS pins. Additionally, 19 Officers have come aboard and three officers have earned their SWO pins.

As we reflect on all of these stellar stats, it is crucial that we also remember Sergeant Rafael Peralta on our one-year anniversary as a ship. We must continue to strive towards excellence in everything we do to honor him and his

family, who is here with us today. In the everyday grind, it can be easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. As we continue to improve as a Crew and a ship, let us remember the sacrifice Sergeant Rafael Peralta made and strive to honor him in our day-to-day efforts. At this milestone in the ship's life, we have proven that we are a force to be reckoned with. We will continue this trend of being the best ship on the waterfront as each anniversary passes! ●

“A-Gang” teamed up to participate in the dodgeball game at the command picnic.



GSE1 Leonard, CS1 Kelly, and FCA2 Wilson pose together after eating the delicious food that was prepared for the crew.



# ***Morale, Welfare & Recreation***

The MWR team put together some great events this past quarter, including the command picnic to celebrate the ship's first anniversary and the command-wide bowling event.



The winners of the MWR dodgeball game pose after the championship game.



Members of MWR, YN1 Billups and PS2 Coney, helped organize the command-wide bowling event.

***The next major MWR event is the Holiday Party on 06 December!***

The crew enjoyed bowling and pizza along with family and friends.



LDM

# CMC'S CORNER

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

CMDCM DIZON



Lava Dogs,

As we ramp up our Basic Phase Certification, we have a lot of underway days ahead of us. During this time, Sailors may experience stress, anxiety, and feeling overwhelmed. Eliminating stressors is the surest way to reduce the negative effect of stress, but it often isn't possible, especially in the arduous operations with which we are involved. Stressors can be reduced by restoring the important mental, physical, social, and spiritual resources that are depleted by those stressors. Rest during down time and physical fitness are a couple of ways to replenish the mind and body. If stress becomes overbearing, seek help. We have many resources available including Military One Source, Fleet and Family Service Centers, Ship & Shore Medical Facilities, Chaplains or just simply talking with your chain of command. My office is always open for anyone who wants to talk, and my number is available on the POD. I consider every crew member as family, and when a family member gets sick, I want to ensure we'll do everything we can to make sure they get better. Thank you for all of your hard work, Lava Dogs!

CMDCM Dizon

# Notes & Important Events



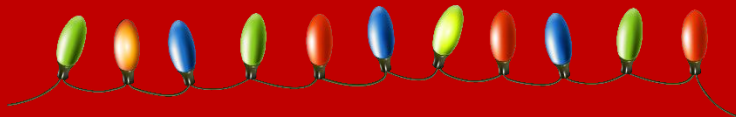
As of 01 OCT, the **USS RAFAEL PERALTA** officially became a part of **DESRON-23** and the **Little Beaver team!**



## HOLIDAY STAND-DOWN DATES:

**1<sup>ST</sup> BLOCK: 15 DECEMBER-27 DECEMBER**

**2<sup>ND</sup> BLOCK: 28 DECEMBER-06 JANUARY**



*Do you write poetry?*

*Do you have any stories you would like to share?*

*We are taking personal submissions for the next LDM!*

*Please contact ENS Condie if interested!*

Special thanks to the PAO team, YN1 Vallejo and STG3 Elliston, for their contributions to LDM and the great photos! Thanks to everyone who submitted articles for this edition of LDM!

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## FORTIS AD FINEM!

